

Special Education Department
Board Report
April 29, 2020

After a busy month of planning and getting direction from MDE/OSE, all of our special education staff are off and running with their distance learning activities. I have hosted several staff zoom meetings for our department to discuss expectations and provide SE updates as they unfolded throughout this time. Although this is not how we planned the end of our school year to be, we have learned so much about teamwork, perseverance, and expanding our technology skills!

Our MoCI and ECSE Teachers are providing a mixed media delivery method for their students. All teachers are making contact with their instructional aides daily throughout the work week, and ancillary staff are making contact with their students at least one time per week. Our CI and ECSE teachers are providing unique distance learning opportunities daily for their students through various online platforms and other technology. Lisa Anderson is directly overseeing the teachers and paraprofessionals work and has been very pleased with how it is going. I have been equally pleased with the work that the ancillary staff are doing during this time as well.

Our staff have been busy conducting IEP meetings via zoom, or conference calls and are reporting that the meetings are going well. Also, all of our special education staff and the local districts special education staff were invited to attend an ISD-Wide zoom meeting hosted by me on April 15th. The main topic was writing Contingency Learning Plans for each student with an IEP. There were around 70 participants on the zoom. The Contingency Learning Plans are what MDE-OSE has recommended as the best practice method for districts to document the services they are providing to their students in SE during this time when their IEPs cannot be fully implemented.

We were able to continue with our scheduled PowerSchool Training for the Special Programs portion that we are transitioning to from Illuminate. Amanda Sanicki did a great job of coordinating the training. All special education staff from both the local districts and the ISD had the opportunity to participate in the training via zoom on April 6, 7, & 8. Amanda and I have done several other zoom meetings regarding the implementation of PS with the project manager during this time as well.

Sue Milecarek has submitted her intent to retire on June 30th. Sue has done an excellent job during her ten years at the ISD and we wish her the very best. In other staff news, Jessica Bellmore will be moving to Dickinson County at the start of the 2020-21 school year to fill the internal position of School Psychologist in Dickinson County

that will be open when Sarah Marshall retires at the end of the school year. We currently have the School Psychology position for Iron County posted and are hoping to have some candidates to interview in June or July.

These tough and unique times have proved what a creative, hardworking staff we have in the special education department. I am very grateful for my little administrative team within our department which consists of Lisa Anderson, Amanda Sanicki, and Nicky Garvaglia who have done everything I have asked of them and provided me with the support to make sure we have the necessary documentation in place for both staff and students. We hold our own internal zoom meetings when needed and are in touch daily via email and texting.

I hope you are all staying healthy and safe during this time and am looking forward to seeing your faces at the April board meeting via zoom:)